

*Introduction*

GEORGE A. PERERA

IT is a pleasure to welcome the members of the Section on Medicine and other guests to this meeting tonight. I need not remind this group of the abuse of antibiotic therapy in the practice of medicine. The fact remains that we are all called upon to use them, and even when employed in justifiable instances, complications appear which are sometimes unavoidable. We are obliged therefore to be familiar with these complications and the possible means of dealing with them when they are encountered.

A bacteriologist once remarked that for every weapon discovered to combat bacterial infection, the bacteria have at least a dozen counter-measures at their command to escape extermination. It is possible that we have not seen the end of their menace, that resistant strains may appear in the future in epidemic form. It is possible that an increasing percentage of the population will become sensitized and unresponsive. It is possible that the recent increase, both relative and absolute, in such disorders as periarteritis nodosa and lupus erythematosus disseminatus may be related to the introduction of antibiotic therapy—at least the curve of incidence began its sharp rise in temporal relationship to the use of sulfonamides and other drugs.

And so I should like to introduce our speakers who will discuss the frequency and management of complications of antibiotic therapy as pertaining to their own major fields of interest.